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TRANSLATION
Of a curious
MEMORIAL

Presented APRIL 25, 1768. by the
PORTUGUESE NATION,
To the Royal Board of *Censure* (*Censura*)
Appointed by his Most Faithful MAJESTY,
To examine and revise all BOOKS,
And to permit the *printing, publishing, reading, and selling* them
In the Kingdom
Of PORTUGAL
And its Dominions.

DEVIZES : Printed by T. BURROUGH, 1769.

TRANSLATION

MEMORIAL

TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN THE YEAR 1841

BY THE HON. JOHN RUSSELL

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN ANSWER TO A RESOLUTION

PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON THE 12TH OF MARCH 1841

RELATIVE TO THE

STATE OF THE

ARMY

IN THE YEAR 1841



A
TRANSLATION of a curious
MEMORIAL &c.

GENTLEMEN,

* * * * * H E tribunal of the Inquisition having
 * * * * * T hitherto blindly followed all the maxims
 * * * * * of the court of Rome, without examin-
 ing how pernicious many of them were
 to the Kings authority, the publick and private
 good, and to the divine illumination of the con-
 sciences of all who profess the same religion; and
 this proceeding, altho' erroneous, was, by the in-
 quisitors, in some thro' ignorance, others thro' flat-
 tery, but in most, thro' fear and danger, which
 every person is in, the instant they disoblige, in
 the minutest thing, the ministers of that tribunal,
 esteemed right and just. However, it is well known,
 by all the learned, judicious, virtuous and impar-
 tial

tial men, that in this esteemed just and right proceeding, are found great injustice and absurd errors; evils which are attributed much more to the ancient statutes of that court, than to the ignorance or malice of the inquisitors, blameable only for blindly following those statutes, preferring the written obedience and execution of them, to the utility, the instruction, and the doctrine necessary to be practised.

Infinite thanks to Almighty God, to our august and faithful sovereign, and to his excellency count d'Oeyras his prime minister, for the resolution taken and put in practise, of recommending the revise of all books which ought to be published in Portugal, to a new and supreme office, consisting of wise, honest, and humane men, to whom we may make our petitions, and represent our grievances, and without dread of being ill received, and much less to be reproved by ministers, who not being subject to, nor prepossessed by the ancient and erroneous statutes of the inquisition, are ordained by God and our sovereign, to reform with care, diligence, and Christian severity, all books which regard our present and future happiness.

The

The holy scripture is the compendium and deposite of the law of God. God himself expressly commands, all the inspired prophets declare, Jesus Christ orders, and his holy Apostles and Evangelists teach, that all men should read, examine, and contemplate these sacred writings, the popes, the holy fathers, the most learned and the most pious doctors in the primitive ages of christianity, observed religiously this binding precept; and without ever thinking to prohibit the reading the Old and New Testament, all faithful christians, of both sexes, had the consolation and satisfaction to read the word of God, to study his life, and execute his will, because they understood and knew what it was. Unhappily a time succeeded, when the exemplary lives of the bishops of Rome were so depravedly perverted, that, desirous of being themselves worshipped as Gods, they lived and acted as if there was no true and only God. The great patrimonial estates which the kings of France conferred on the bishops and the titles which their pride arrogated to themselves; the pretensions which they formed, and were founded on their sole ambition

bition and arrogance, and practised during the im-
 becility, the weakness, and superstition of many
 princes, who were inveigled to consent to such abu-
 ses, incroachments, and errors, by the wicked coun-
 sels of Jesuits who governed their consciences; all
 these changed into wickedness, the sanctity of those
 bishops; for in the holy scriptures, not one single
 word authorises their great disorders and scandalous
 proceedings; but on the contrary, the innovations
 and the alterations which they sacrilegiously intro-
 duced and established in the doctrine and dogmas of
 the christian religion, are diametrically opposite to
 the word of God. To conceal from the pious and
 good christians, the iniquity of their enormous and
 detestable attempts, the popes were obliged to hin-
 der and prohibit them the holy bible in the vulgar
 tongue. This cruel and criminal prohibition, had
 very little success; and we may add, was despised
 by all the christian nations and sexes, where the
 power of the inquisition was not established. The
 French, Germans, English, and Dutch Roman Ca-
 tholicks, or Protestants, enjoyed many editions of
 the holy scriptures, translated into the respective
 languages,

languages, and none of them were in the least culpable, nor any formal proceeding used against them, for reading and meditating on the word of God.

Notwithstanding the odious circumspection of the tribunal of the inquisition, venal slaves and blind followers to the decrees of the court of Rome, the bible is translated into Italian and Spanish; and thanks to the piety and learning of John Ferreyra de Almedia, our worthy compatriot, and to the missionaries of the king of Denmark in India, the bible is there translated, altho' badly printed, in the Portuguese language: However, either from the distance, or the fear of the inquisition, it's certain we are deprived of this work, owing principally to the study and pains of the said father Ferreyra, priest of the order of St. Peter, who, instead of being venerated and rewarded for so holy and so useful an undertaking, is not known in Portugal, but for the unjust and ridiculous treatment which he suffered in the inquisition of Goa, for the the proofs he had given of his zeal to to christianity.

All

All the ancient ordinances of this kindom, all new laws, all decrees, councils, proclamations, &c. which emanate from the throne, and by which our sovereign intimates his orders, and makes known to us his will; all these are wrote, printed, and published, in our mother tongue; to act contrary, would be the greatest absurdity; because, if published in Latin, few Portuguese would either understand, serve, or obey the king, so as to comply from the reason and cause of such laws, without which, no obedience can be esteemed legitimately true and obligatory.

The pope and the inquisition having hitherto hindered us the reading the holy scriptures in the vulgar language, we are obliged to declare, confess, and protest, before Almighty God, and in the face of all the world, that we are Christians without law; for excepting a few learned men, who understand Latin, all other Portuguese are totally ignorant of the law of God: Calling themselves Christians, without having seen or read the precepts, counsels, and doctrines which Jesus Christ
has

has given them, and what the Holy Evangelists left in depofite in the New Testament. The remedy to this great evil, and very great error, is very neceffary, and ought to be very quick; fo that from what has been related with fo much truth, fincerity, brevity, and clearnefs, the Portuguefe pray and beg, that the free reading of the Holy Bible may be granted and conceded, without any reftriction, in the fame manner as was practifed in the firft ages of the Church; ages truly bleffed with learned and pious men, and in which Chriftianity made the greateft and moft rapid progrefs, and until the bible is tranflated into the Portuguefe language, we defire and hope, that a free permiffion, and free recourfe to all the verfions of the Old and New Testament, in whatever language, may be fuffered and permitted in Portugal, and its dominions.

This request and defire being founded in truth, reason, and juftice, no arguments are neceffary to patronize them, neither do we alledge or point out any of the many proofs which authorize them, being certain, that all of them are well known to
the

the wise and intelligent ministers to whom we have recourse: We only offer, that if the laws of the prince, on the knowledge and observance of which depend our temporal interests, are made known to us in the mother and vulgar language, the law of God, on the intelligence and observance of which, depends the salvation of our souls, ought in consequence to be allowed, without the least obstacle, in the same language, and in all the known and vulgar idioms. We did not presume to make this petition to the inquisition, well knowing it would have been reprov'd and condemn'd; the ministers to whom we humbly present it, are not as the inquisitors, despotick; our will is law, so we judge it, and so we will have it, say the inquisitors, persecuting the innocent, and hiding from us the book of truth, without troubling themselves at the just murmurings of this nation, and the just criticisms of foreign nations, nor of the general scandal which their arbitrary proceedings have carried throughout the whole prudent, learned, and orthodox world; the misery and poverty they have brought on this nation, making or causing us to be esteem'd,

teemed, not only as ignorant, but as barbarians.

Our petition being in every respect just, and tending to a good end, we hope that all the ministers of which this board consists, will be favourable to us, counselling and determining, without delay, and unanimously, that the reading of the holy scriptures shall be amply and fully permitted us.

In case this favour should not be granted, which we think impossible, the Portuguese nation with justice hope, that the gentlemen ministers will produce solid, convincing, and demonstrative reasons, to shew all the world, and the Portuguese nation in particular, what we think still more impossible, and that is, evidently to prove that men may see without light or eyes; and that they may observe the law of God, and follow the doctrine of Jesus Christ, without the least knowledge of the sacred books, wherein this doctrine is divinely deposited.

Truth is the daughter of God, and should be the guide for all mortals; all men living cannot deny or refute what is contained in this petition;
for

for this reason we make it publick, desiring that all Europe may have knowledge of our just requests, hoping, that our superiors will attend to us with the justice they owe to God, themselves, their own nation, and all the universe.

Lisbon April 25, 1768.